ISASC

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF ANTIQUE SCALE COLLECTORS

Chairman's Newsletter

Number 18. April, 1983.

NEWS OF THE MOMENT.

As this newsletter is being written, Utz Schmidt is preparing to host 60 or so scale enthusiasts--members, spouses, and guests--including the Steins, at the ISASC convention in Germany. This is our fifth annual conclave, others having been held in San Francisco, London, New York, and Delft, and we're looking forward to a great time together. For those who could not be with us, I'll provide a full report in the next Chairman's Newsletter, and for the enjoyment of all, here's a poem written for the occasion by member Fritz Schmerl. The original is in German, along with, as Fritz put it, his "attempt of an English version"--

Greetings to Sindelfingen

Über Waagen und Gewichten
Ist es nicht so leicht zu dichten,
Doch ich will, vor allen Dingen,
Reimen, um Euch lob zu singen,
Glück und Segen Euch zu bringen
Für erfolg und gut Gelingen
In der Stadt von Sindelfingen.

When it comes to weights and scales,
My poetic talent fails,
I would gladly give a King
's ransom could I fly and bring
My own self to Sindelfing-
en, but there's no single thing
That would hinder me to sing
Praise and blessings which would ring
Clearly while collectors wing
Fast their way to Sindelfing-
en.

(over)

FAIT ACCOMPLI.

The new directory, of course, which turned out to be a project of great complexity (and much hard work). However, it's all we had hoped for, and now that the contents are computer-stored, future editions should be somewhat easier to produce. As you'll note, its main feature, and a most functional one, is the cross-indexing, which enables members to be found either by geographic location or by name. As mentioned in a previous newsletter, it's our intention to update the directory annually and mail the new edition each April. However, as an added service, we're considering a quarterly supplement (thrice yearly) of new members, to be included with EQM.

MEMBERSHIP STATUS.

One rather regretful happenstance in connection with the new directory is that we had to drop a number of members who did not pay their 1983 dues. At the moment, however, even after taking that step into account, our ranks number 243, and there's every reason to assume we'll continue to grow. Scale collectors seem to abound!

PICTURE PERFECT.

One of our newest members, Gene Mahoney of Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, brought to our attention a painting by Jan Vermeer titled "Woman Holding a Balance", done around 1664, in which a scale is prominently portrayed. Then, in a second letter, he acquainted us with two other paintings pertaining to our interest: "Portrait of George Gisze" by Hans Holbein, painted in 1532, and "The Banker and His Wife" by Quentin Metsys, done in 1514.

We subsequently learned from Michael Crawforth that he has a list of a number of such paintings, and the joy to all this is that full-color prints of some, if not all, seem to be available, and are quite suitable for framing and hanging amidst one's collection.

That having been learned, Tod Carley has agreed to prepare a master list of such paintings and determine the source and cost of any prints that are available. We'll then provide our members with this information and they can purchase them direct. If you know of any such paintings, and especially where they repose, please send the information to Tod. And in behalf of all of us, a big "thank you" to Gene Mahoney for getting us started on this project.

MORE PROJECT NEWS.

Michael Crawforth, in the middle of more undertakings than you can imagine, has completed the EQM Index, covering every issue from the first one through 1982, 19 in all. It was a monumental task (93 hand-printed pages!), and should be invaluable to all of us who dote on EQM as a source for virtually everything one would want to know about scales.

However, several preparatory steps are necessary before the index can be provided our members; namely, entering it in the computer, proofreading and correcting the printout, and reproducing several hundred copies. Depending on available time and labor, we're hoping to mail it to members in July (the earliest) or October (the latest).

LITERATURE UPDATE.

Tod Carley has asked us to advise all members who ordered the book by Andre Nitecki on gold weights of West Africa that a slight delay has occurred, due to the original shipment from Canada arriving in deplorably damaged condition. A replacement order is on its way, and Tod expects to put copies in the mail by the end of April.

MISCELLANY.

** Every year, Peter DiCristofaro most generously (and voluntarily) sends an extra stipend with his dues as a

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contribution to our coffers, and this year was no exception. The mail brought his dues and an extra $100, for which we thank him several times over.

** This past February I had occasion to visit member Bill Doniger in Berkeley, California, and be smitten (again) by one of the finest scale collections I've ever seen. Bill has more than 500 scales of a diversity you wouldn't believe, including some rare ones that decidedly are museum pieces. Bill and wife Mary are now antique dealers, and have a charming shop -- Lost and Found Antiques -- in Albany, California (close to Berkeley), where, on any given day, you can find a number of fine scales among the Doniger wares. It's located in the Solana Avenue Antique Market, a mile-long street of shops offering antiques and collectibles from many an era. The Doniger shop is open Tuesday through Saturday, and if you're planning a visit, give Bill a call in advance at 415/525-9711, or at his home, 415/841-5234.

** Linda Loewenstein, my married daughter and ardent scale fancier, decided that, "Old scale collectors never die; they just lose their balance."

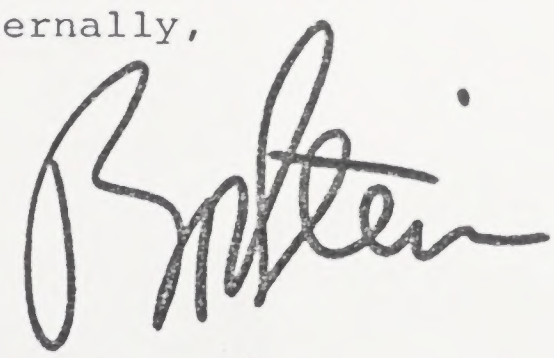
** Marilyn Roberts, wife of member J. Wayne Roberts, seems to be a professional artist of considerable talent, and has asked that we apprise members that she's available to paint a favorite scale or set of weights in oil or acrylic, needing only a photograph as subject matter. It seems to us that this is something special to consider, and if you'd like more information, feel free to contact Marilyn directly at Box 558, Chino Valley, AZ 86323; phone 602/636-2345.

** Anecdote for postal scale afficionados: This past January, I attended a banquet at which the Honorable Frank Goldie,

postmaster of Chicago, was a head table guest. Undaunted, I approached him at the dais, introduced myself, and told him about ISASC and my collection of letter and parcel scales. When he seemed to express something more than polite interest and told me of his regrets in not having collected scales throughout his post office career, I seized the opportunity and said, "Mr. Goldie, how would you like to see 425 postal scales?". Deducing from his pleasant (albeit shocked) reaction that he would, I invited him to dinner at the Stein home. He came (with wife Cleo), he saw, and he was conquered! It just may be that he'll become a late-blooming collector and join our society. With his connections, acquiring postal scales in big numbers might turn out to be easy!

** Enjoyed a visit from member David Whittingham of Dallas, who was in Chicago in late March attending a convention and took time to come for lunch and stay on for scale talk.

** Our 1982 financial statement is enclosed, which should be self-explanatory. Our fiscal situation is reasonably good, although not nearly as good as a year prior, due to the increased costs of running our society. Costs in 1983 also are expected to rise, due mainly to the printing of EQM (now $1,100 per issue) and the printing and mailing costs of our new directory. However, all in all, if membership holds steady and our literature and catalog sales continue at a good pace, we should stay solvent for the forseeable future.

On that agreeable note, I'll bid you adieu ...

Fraternally,